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Mills, Brooks And Streams

Capt. Wilbur A. Verity

Always a source of wonderment to me was the vast quantity of water found around Hempstead Plains, a strip of land not wide and not very long, with little vegetation. Water from underground springs in the plains formed a brook in the east part of Hempstead village. This brook ran south of the now Hempstead Town Hall, under Greenwich Street and on to the west of Village Avenue.

From there it was called Mill River and took a more southerly

direction as it flowed through Hempstead and Rockville Centre. Five or six ponds were formed on its way to Rockville Centre and mills were erected on most of them. Some of the most notable were the DeMott Mill, the Eagle Mill, and one on Lakeville Avenue where the gatehouse still stands. A grist and saw mill was located on Merrick Road while at the north end, now Tanglewood, another mill was located. This mill was noted as being the place of one of the first scrimmages of the American Revolution.

As Mill River flowed south of Merrick Road it widened considerably and at Atlantic Avenue, East Rockaway, furnished water-power for the Davison Grist Mill. The mill was later moved to the

Davison Lumber Yard and more recently to its present site in East Rockaway Park where it is a museum. Mill River deepened south of Atlantic Avenue and made navigation possible to the East Rockaway wharves.

Also from Hempstead Plains, a brook ran south through Uniondale and following Brookside Avenue flowed into Hingle's Pond and under Kissing Bridge at Seaman Avenue, Freeport. Many Sunday walks ended at the bridge with hearts and initials cut into nearby trees, long gone. The brook continued into the Milburn Reservoir at Sunrise Highway and finally the Milburn River at Atlantic Avenue.

Another brook ran along Grand
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